



The GRANGE

Issue: 84

MAY-JUNE 2001

CHAIR'S REPORT

May 14, 2001 was The Grange Twentieth Annual General Meeting. It was successful I think. About thirty volunteers attended and there were several invited guests, including Matthew Teitelbaum, Wanda Dubé, President of Gallery Volunteers, Scott James and Margaret Machell, Chair and Member of The Grange Council respectively. Our guest speaker was Christian Giroux of the Gallery Education Department who took us on a tour of the Contemporary Galleries. This was extremely interesting, Christian is an excellent teacher / interpreter. It was a first – rate introduction to contemporary art, something we will be dealing with during the *House Guests* exhibition. Following the tour we came back to The Grange and enjoyed a social hour consuming Jane Ash and her Crew's marvelous spread.

Anna Patrick, who as you all know, has had knee replacement surgery and has more to come, has decided that she can no longer continue her duties on The Grange Executive. Elaine Freedman has agreed to step into the breach to become Chair of Historic Kitchens. Elaine knows a great deal about the subject and already has ideas and plans for training and information sessions. The rest of The Grange Executive will stay the same. For those of you who were unable to attend the Annual General Meeting, all reports and notes will be available in The Grange Volunteer sitting room.

Have a good summer, everyone.

- Avril Stringer, The Grange Chair

Total visitors for the 2000 -2001 year: 22,480

Total volunteer hours: 10,464



Congratulations to Avril Stringer who continues her role as Chair of The Grange for The Grange Volunteer Executive 2001-2002 year.

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International Year of Volunteers - AGO Special Event



The Grange table at the AGO Volunteer event held April 25, 2001

The week of April 22 to 28 was the AGO's special tribute to their Volunteers. Special vault tours were held and there was an Arts Treasure Hunt as well as discounts at the Retail store.

A special event was held on Wednesday April 25 in the Walker Court. Both staff and volunteers celebrated volunteering at the AGO. Each of the volunteer areas set up information tables surrounding the Walker Court. The above picture portrays The Grange table set up by Avril Stringer and Georgette Caldwell. Special T-shirts were designed to commemorate volunteering at the AGO. T-shirts are available for \$ 12 at the volunteer office. The year 2001 has been designated by the United Nations as International Year of Volunteers.

House Guests Training

As you are all aware, inviting 7 people to stay as house guests involves a lot of work--particularly if they are planning on staying 5 months! So, here is a brief outline of our plans to date. This is a major exhibition for the AGO and we intend to stay open gallery hours for it. In order to do this, we will need to recruit at least 30 new volunteers. A major recruiting drive will begin shortly and we hope to do a mass interview mid-July. Three different training times have been set up to train these new volunteers on the basics of the house. They will be expected to have a basic level of understanding, but will not be required to go through the full training programme.

Sometime in June an information manual will be made available, through the day captains, for everyone to read. This will have information on the exhibition, the artists and the artist's proposals.

In September, there will be a session on interpreting contemporary art and on the particular works that will be installed in the house. This will be mandatory for both the new volunteers and for our own. We will very likely have ongoing informal discussions as well. When the exhibition opens, artist talks will be scheduled and everyone will be encouraged to attend. It will be interesting to hear what the artists themselves feel about the house.

REMINDER

Please submit your news articles for the next Grange newsletter by

Wednesday, August 22, 2001.

Email submissions are welcome!

The Grange Volunteer Executive 2001-2002

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Georgette Caldwell

DAY CAPTAINS

Monday: Jane Heinemann
Tuesday: Elvira Putrus
Wednesday: Cathy Stroud
Wednesday Bridge: Helvi Hunter
Wednesday Eve: Marg McGuigan
Thursday: June O'Brien
Friday: Beverley Sutton
Saturday: Susan Wakefield
Sunday: Edna Rigby

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As I did last year, I would like to use this space to re-print the presentation that I gave at the AGM, for those of you who were not there, as it was a reflection on *House Guests*.

As you know, *House Guests* is an exhibition of the works of 7 contemporary artists who have been invited to create installations for The Grange. These free-standing pieces will be located in different areas throughout the house. Why are we doing this? It celebrates the second century of the AGO by juxtaposing past and present. It is indicative of a growing interest amongst artists with heritage sites in Europe and North America. And, it is a unique opportunity to highlight The Grange as the beginning of the AGO.

What I would like to focus on here is the idea of installations in general. In doing that, I am going to

ask you to think about The Grange in a slightly different way than normal. I want you to think about The Grange itself as an installation, created by Jeanne Minhinnick in 1973. Remember, it is not filled with Boulton furniture arranged the way they would have had it. We don't know what the Boultons had or liked.

Minhinnick was a self-trained historian with a tremendous amount of knowledge and a particular idea of what needed to be done. We know her working method from both the restoration video and from Margaret Machell's recollections. Jeanne would spend a long time in the empty shell of a room becoming attuned to the space, feeling the atmosphere, imagining. Then she would have her ex-husband sketch out her ideas of furnishings as imagined during the time she spent in the

room—these are hanging in our orientation classroom. Finally she would gather the materials and arrange them. Her installations reflected her ideas, creative process and areas of interest.

In a similar way, the contemporary artists creating installations for *House Guests* have spent time in The Grange reflecting on the spaces, feeling the atmosphere and doing research before creating their installations. Their ideas are sketched out before being made. Of course there is a difference. Where Jeanne, as an historian was trying to reconstruct the past, these artists are responding to it—but their process or methodology is similar. And, like Jeanne, they intend that their work interests, excites and challenges the visitor and ourselves to reflect on the relationships and tensions inherent in history. This is an exhibition to be excited about.

An Afternoon in May

By Georgette Caldwell

One Friday afternoon in early May we had the pleasure of welcoming three blind ladies into the The Grange who, though they lived in Toronto, had never been into the House. Thanks to their two seeing-eye dogs and one lady's dexterity with her white cane they had no trouble following me into various rooms, where they touched some of the artifacts with butterfly light fingers to 'see' what they were.

They asked about the colour of the carpets and the walls and reached up to run their hands along mantelpieces to gauge the height. We walked around the perimeter of the Music room to find out how large that room was, which amazed them. As various artifacts were mentioned they would call to each other "Oh, do 'look' at this" or "Come and 'see' this".

They took so much pleasure in their tour and were so fascinated by the history of the time and the family, it was difficult to remember they were in fact unable to see – certainly stairs and doorways were no barrier to their experience of the House. The kitchens were of particular delight, especially when samples of baked goods were on offer. The ladies travel across North America quite often to visit museums and galleries but 'hand-on' experience was very pleasing to them, particularly when they discovered the 'necessary' in the best bedroom – that word had them in gales of laughter.

It was a most rewarding couple of hours we spent together and they couldn't thank us enough for helping them to 'see' our House. Hopefully, they will come again in the future.

Book Review

Wise, Leonard. Toronto street names: an illustrated guide to their origins, by Leonard Wise and Allan Gould. Willowdale, ON, Firefly Books, 2000.

Toronto Street Names

Toronto's history dates from 1793 when John Graves Simcoe laid out a 10-block settlement on the shores of Lake Ontario. This settlement grew into the town of York and later developed into the present city of Toronto.

Early inhabitants of the town of York named its streets to commemorate their own roots in England, or military battles and wars in which they had fought. Some streets were named for early Canadian politicians such as Darcy McGee, Wilfrid Laurier, Sir Robert Borden and Egerton Ryerson.

Streets with their histories are listed alphabetically in this book and there are interesting pictures of late 19th century and early 20th century Toronto, including one of The Grange (page 104) and one of Beverley House (page 37).

There is a copy of this book in The Grange Library.

The Forster Connection

Have you ever wondered about the "Forster" connection – the green chevron on the Boulton family crest? It comes of course, from Mrs. D'Arcy senior's family. Elizabeth (Betsy) Boulton was a daughter of James Forster, who was a prominent attorney at Gray's Inn in London, England. James Forster was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1735, Called to the Bar in 1755 and became a Sergeant-at-Law in 1757. (A Sergeant-at-Law was a barrister of "superior rank") Gray's Inn has been a law teaching establishment since the reign of Edward III (1327-1377) in the former residence of the De Gray family. Gray's Inn Hall flourished under Elizabeth the First. C. 1763 James Forster's Arms were put in a window in Gray's Inn Hall. A Mr. Peckit was paid £3.13s.6d for producing the Arms which can still be seen.

(Source: Gray's Inn website and letter from Gray's Inn librarian)

Waste Book

Some weeks ago I was showing a couple of the artists participating in the House Guests exhibition, around the House. I asked if I might show them what I consider to be our most prized possession - which is, William Henry's Waste Book. Then I was asked why I consider it to be the 'most prized'. At the time I could emphasize only its age and the fact that it is a very real link with the Boultons. Later I began to organize my real thoughts on the book. I have had the privilege of examining it, I know that it is hand made, the sheets carefully sewn together in the prescribed bookbinding method – something I was taught at school – the lines and columns drawn in and the cover individualized by William Henry, thus:

WILLIAM HENRY BOULTON
HIS BOOK
YORK
UPPER CANADA
NORTH AMERICA
THE WORLD

We have the portrait of William Henry in the hall, a sophisticated man in his 30s but here in the Waste Book (waste book is an old term for an accounting notebook) we have something of his from 16 years of age. The nineteenth century, certainly for people of the Boulton's class was formal with many rules and conventions – rules and conventions almost beyond our understanding today but somehow the 16 year old William Henry doesn't seem so very different from a 16 year old today. He would have been more formally dressed, of course, certainly no jeans and tee shirt but basically much the same.

Doors Open 2001

Once again Toronto hosted a successful Doors Open programme, and, again The Grange was included. Despite the rain Sunday afternoon, we still had a total of 875 visitors over the weekend. Thank you to the Saturday and Sunday volunteers who welcomed so many and shared their knowledge and love of the house.

House Guests Exhibition

By: Michelle Abrams,
Sunday Volunteer & House Guests
liaison

The *House Guests* Exhibition we are hosting this fall intrigues me with the idea of blending the contemporary with the historical in a location that is dear to my heart, The Grange. This is a great opportunity for The Grange to be in the spotlight and for our volunteers to shine. Our expert knowledge of the house and the friendly environment we as volunteers try to create can only enhance the visitor's experience of this contemporary exhibit. It shall be exciting to observe the public's reaction to the juxtaposition of costumed interpreters in a historical setting, next to very contemporary pieces. I think we shall put a whole new spin on the word 'contemporary'!

An exhibit of this magnitude can only aid in further connecting The Grange to the rest of the gallery. This in turn will hopefully result in more of the general public 'finding' our 'hidden' treasure and enjoying what our house has to offer. As the birthplace of our present gallery, it is only fitting that The Grange should host such an exhibit and I am excited to be a part of it. For me, this is a perfect opportunity to meld my love of the new and old in one setting. As volunteers, we will all benefit from this unique opportunity to spotlight the house we all love.

Toronto

From Encyclopedia Britannica

"On 1787 Lord Dorchester, Governor in chief of Canada, opened negotiations with three Indian chiefs for the purchase of a site for the future capital of Ontario; about 250,000 acres fronting the lake were acquired in exchange of £1,700, bales of cloth, axes and other trading goods."

Submitted by Linda Tyrrell,
Wed Evening volunteer